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MN013601. SECNAV Responds to Terrorist Attack at the Pentagon
By the Office of the Secretary of the Navy
Washington, DC - The following is the text of a message released by the Secretary of the Navy on Sept. 12:
America's naval forces share in the loss and sorrow of yesterday's attack. Our men and women in uniform, civilians and contractors were part of the nation's family that gave their lives for liberty, freedom and our way of life.
In the face of an unseen enemy and unknown dangers, the Pentagon's evacuation was punctuated by anonymous acts of bravery and kindness by countless Navy and Marine Corps service members and civilians.
In the days ahead, we will learn more about these attacks, will remain vigilant and will be prepared to carry out the president's orders.
We will spare no effort to protect the American people and support our commander in chief's pledge to bring to justice the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them.
As we have throughout our history, our nation will overcome this tragedy and emerge with an even stronger resolve to our fundamental principles and values.
My thoughts and prayers are with each of you and I know that our prayers are with the victims, their families, and our commander in chief. God bless America.
- Gordon England, Secretary of the Navy
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MN013602. Surgeon General Responds to Terrorist Attacks
The following was released by the Navy Surgeon General on Sept. 12:
Tuesday started like most days, but ended unlike any other in our Nation's memory. These tragic and horrible incidents should send the clear message that our freedom must be maintained by constant vigilance and READINESS - and reinforce this as our essential responsibility!
As has been our practice in the past, Navy Medicine will meet this challenge with compassion and determination. Immediately following news of

the attack on the Pentagon, Navy providers rushed to the scene to help triage and care for the victims. USNS Comfort is steaming toward New York harbor to assist local relief efforts and demonstrate our Nation's resolve.

Although the landscape of our nation will be markedly different in the following days, weeks, and months, the Navy Medicine mission continues: Force Health Protection. As we struggle to deal with this tragedy, I ask each of you to do what you can to help those in need. Give of yourself, console a friend, give blood, say a prayer.

Our republic has been shaken by this act of senseless violence. We cannot and will not let this act of terrorism take away our security and freedom.

My thoughts and prayers are with the victims of these tragic events as well as all who are providing support and assistance. Bravo Zulu!

For many years, the motto of Navy Medicine has been Charlie Golf One, "standing by to assist." Today's signal is Charlie Papa One, "steaming to assist."

God bless you all.

- VADM Michael L. Cowan, MC, Surgeon General of the Navy

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MN013603. Navy Medicine Responds to Attacks

By Jan Davis, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery

Washington, DC - Within minutes of the attack on the World Trade Center in New York City, even before the crash of a hijacked airliner into the Pentagon, Navy Medicine began readying to respond to what has become the worst act of terrorism ever perpetrated against America.

Navy Surgeon General VADM Michael L. Cowan, MC, was in a meeting with most of his senior staff Tuesday morning (Sept. 11) when he was informed of the World Trade Center attack.

"This is a dark day for America," said Cowan. "Two aircraft have collided with the World Trade Center, apparent acts of terrorism. We'll cut this meeting short. I know, as medical professionals, you all want to do what you can to support the situation. Let's prepare to assist."

Shortly after the announcement, a third plane crashed into the Pentagon. The rising gray and black smoke was clearly visible from the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, just a mile away. Non-essential BUMED personnel were immediately sent home for their safety.

On hearing of the Pentagon disaster, National Naval Medical Center Bethesda, MD, immediately sent 20 medical personnel to help triage victims.

Tuesday afternoon, the decision was made to ready USNS COMFORT (T-AH 20), one of two Navy hospital ships, for deployment to support New York City. Early Wednesday, about 200 Navy personnel from NNMCMC Bethesda, MD, were bused to the Baltimore pier where the hospital ship was on standby status. It got underway Wednesday afternoon to assist with the disaster response in lower Manhattan.

About 530 additional Navy medical and support personnel will join the ship enroute. Most will come from NNMCMC Bethesda, but will also include personnel from Naval Medical Clinics Quantico VA, Newport RI, Groton CT, Patuxent River MD, and Portsmouth NH; Naval Medical Center Portsmouth VA; and Naval Dental Command Northeast.

COMFORT is one of the largest U.S. medical facilities on land or sea. It can be configured for up to 1,000 beds and 12 operating rooms. The last time COMFORT deployed was in June 1998 in support of training exercise Baltic Challenge in Lithuania.

Naval Reservists and personnel from other Navy medical facilities may help "backfill" at NNMCMC Bethesda.

Meanwhile, NNMCMC remained poised and ready for any call that might come

its way to support the Pentagon disaster. While they waited, many took time to give blood at the Armed Services Blood Bank Center located at NNMCC. More than 300 units were collected in less than 24 hours.

Cowan praised Navy Medicine's seamless response.

"There is no question that we are ready," said Cowan. "A month ago, when I took office, I said the men and women of Navy Medicine are the best I've seen. They are proving me right during this tragedy."

Editor's Note: The above story was also released by e-mail on Sept. 12.

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MN013604. "It Was One of the Most Humbling Experiences of My Life"

New York City - ENS Kathryn Sciarretta, MC, USNR, is a first year medical student at New York University School of Medicine and completed Officer Indoctrination School (OIS) this summer. Below is the e-mail she sent to her father in the wake of the disaster.

Dad:

We are doing everything there that can be done to help. The entire city has come together to help donate food, clothes, time and effort. Hundreds of firefighters' lives have been lost and every man's and woman's life is threatened each day. There are police officers from round the Tristate area, the National Guard, FBI, Reservists, Marines - even the Coast Guard.

I spent the day today at ground zero. My friend Sharaam Aarbi and I distributed masks to workers and rescuers to help prevent the inhalation of asbestos in the air. We actually commandeered a police transport and got officers to drive us to the emergency room where we got supplies. We gave eye washes and transported food and water.

It was like a war zone with a refugee camp. We walked around burned out cars and abandoned shops. We found the wheel of one of the planes lying in the middle of a side road.

It was one of the most humbling experiences of my life and it made me realize that being a doctor is everything I have wanted and everything I was meant to be.

It was inconceivable to me to have been anywhere today but at the triage center. It didn't matter that I was a first year med student on the third week of classes - firefighters, police officers and everyone else looked to my friend and me for orders. Firefighters with smoke, grime and asbestos in their eyes were on their knees as we rinsed their eyes with saline solution. As they blinked with relief they looked up to thank us. I could have cried because they had been working for two days, watching friends die and risking their own lives. We thanked them as the true heroes of this tragedy.

We finally left around 4 p.m. - and walking back made us see the difference. It's a world turned upside down. Love to everyone from me. Kathryn

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MN013605. Comfort Underway to New York City

Washington, DC - USNS Comfort (T-AH 20), one of the Navy's two hospital ships, is heading to New York City to provide support in the aftermath of the Sept. 11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center.

The ship is a huge floating hospital with up to 1,000 beds, 12 operating rooms, full laboratory and diagnostic facilities, pharmacy, helicopter landing pad, and housing and dining facilities for its medical and support staff. It is equal in size to one of the nation's largest trauma centers.

The vast majority of the medical and support staff on board are from

National Naval Medical Center Bethesda, Md. They train every 90 days on the ship, practicing scenarios that include mass casualty response.

Comfort is kept in reduced operating status in Baltimore, Md., unless activated to support national missions. For this mission, it is crewed with 61 civilian mariners and 730 Navy medical and support personnel.

Comfort is expected to arrive in New York on Friday (Sept. 14) after unloading additional personnel and supplies at Naval Weapons Station Earle, NJ.

Comfort joined the Navy fleet in 1987 and has actively participated in events around the world. It served in the Persian Gulf War in 1990, assisted with the Haitian migrant operations in the Caribbean in 1994, and has participated in multi-national exercises to improve cooperation in peace support operations.

When in reduced status, Comfort operates with a crew of 13 civilian mariners and 58 Navy personnel. Activated, additional civilian mariners are assigned to the ship, and medical personnel join the ship from NNMCC Bethesda and other East Coast medical facilities. Their positions are filled with personnel from other Navy medical facilities, civilian health care providers, and Navy Reservists.

USNS Comfort is operated by the Navy's Military Sealift Command, the ocean transportation provider for the Department of Defense. It also operates USNS Mercy, the Navy's other hospital ship stationed on the West Coast.

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MN013606. Donors Overwhelm San Diego Blood Donor Center

By Doreen Rekoski, Naval Medical Center San Diego

San Diego - Even as the full horror of Tuesday's events began to sink in, they started coming to the Blood Donor Center . . . active duty personnel and their family members, Reservists, civilian employees, and retirees.

They arrived first in a trickle, one by one, then as a steady stream. Focused in their purpose, they wanted to do something to help. To do something to lessen their sense of loss and grief. To help in the only way they knew how - by donating blood.

"When I heard about the attack, I came in to donate," said HM1 Margaret Paul, stationed at Naval Medical Center San Diego. "I don't normally do this, but I wanted to come in today to do what I could."

That was the common answer of those who arrived at the center to donate blood.

HN Danny Douty, also from NMC San Diego, was off-duty when he learned of the disaster. He knew how crucial the need for blood would be and wanted to do his part. First, he prayed for the victims and their families. Then he came to the Blood Donor Center.

"The moment I woke up and heard the news it seemed like the Oklahoma bombing all over again," said Douty. "Seeing what goes on in the medical field firsthand, I know what's going on in the minds of emergency workers. In a situation like this, the need for blood is great. If my family were involved in a serious incident such as this, I would hope everyone would feel the same way I do and react by giving blood."

First time donor LTJG Leslie Swindon, NC, was also off-duty when she heard the news. Knowing the dire need for blood, she came to the center. "I was in shock when I heard the news. This was such a surprise."

The Navy's Blood Donor Center at NMC San Diego operates its own blood collection operation independent of the American Red Cross and San Diego Blood Bank. The center collects donations from its eligible population of active duty members, family members, Reservists, retirees and civil service

employees.

When news of the disaster hit, the center readied itself for the flood of donors expected. "In a time like this, people want to donate. They want to do something and in this situation, this is the most valuable way to help," said LT Aaron Harding, officer in charge of the Blood Donor.

LCDR Mark Crowell, MSC, head of the blood bank at San Diego, was gratified by the tremendous donor response. On Tuesday alone, the center took in 90 donations. Wednesday, the number was even higher - 110 donors walked through the door to give. At times, as many as 30 donors waited in line to donate.

"We've been collecting everything we need," said Crowell. "We've had no need to advertise. Donors are coming out of the goodness of their hearts to give and they're here till we close the door in the evening."

He credited the active duty and civilian laboratory team for meeting the challenge of accommodating the large influx of donors and keeping the operation running smoothly. "Our contingency team did a fantastic job," Crowell said. "They were doing what they were trained to do and they did it well."

The need for blood is ongoing and will continue long after the crisis. The Blood Donor Center not only supports the needs of NMC San Diego's patients, it supports the Navy's operational commitments and on a limited basis, the community. In light of the situation the nation now faces, this is a crucial concern, said Crowell. In crisis situations, the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery can direct that the center take additional operational taskings.

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MN013607. Navy Secures Ports, Provides Relief in Wake of Terrorist Attacks
By Jerome W. Mapp, Navy Wire Service

Washington, DC - Simultaneous terrorist attacks at the World Trade Center in New York, and the Pentagon, prompted an immediate security and relief effort by the U.S. Navy.

As aircraft carrier battle groups positioned ships off the coasts of Washington, D.C., and New York, the hospital ship USNS Comfort (T AH 20) prepared to sail from its berth at Baltimore, Md., to embark Navy medical personnel at Earle, N.J., before setting sail for the coast of New York.

In Norfolk, Va., the USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN 73) Carrier Battle Group (CVBG) set sail in support of defense and humanitarian efforts off the coast of New York.

The ships in the battle group include USS LEYTE GULF (CG 55), USS MONTEREY (CG 61), USS HUE CITY (CG 66), USS VICKSBURG (CG 69), USS VELLA GULF (CG 72), USS RAMAGE (DDG 61), USS ROSS (DDG 71), USS DETROIT (AOE 4), USS BATAAN (LHD 5) and USS SHREVEPORT (LPD 12).

George Washington will respond to tasking from the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) in providing air defense to the city.

USS JOHN F. KENNEDY (CV 67) was already at sea when the terrorist attacks occurred. The carrier, with nearly a full air wing of fighter, attack and reconnaissance aircraft aboard, joined the GEORGE WASHINGTON CVBG off the coast of New York.

Other Atlantic Fleet ships have been directed to deploy with embarked Marines and medical assets to provide air defense, humanitarian and medical support in both the New York City and Washington, D.C. areas.

Pacific Fleet ships underway and ready to respond to any tasks in support of national defense at sea to contribute to the air and sea defense of the U.S. West Coast and Hawaii include USS JOHN STENNIS (CVN 74), USS MOBILE BAY (CG 53), USS VALLEY FORGE (CG 50), USS DECATUR (DDG 73), USS STETHEM (DDG 63), USS HIGGINS (DDG 76), USS RUSSELL (DDG 59), USS FIFE (DD

991), USS RENTZ (FFG 46), USS SIDES (FFG 14), USS THATCH (FFG 43), USS FORD (FFG 54), USS RODNEY M. DAVIS (FFG 60), USS SALVOR (ARS 52) and USNS YUKON (T-AO 202).

Navy and Marine Corps installations, including medical facilities, are at the highest states of alert. They are taking increased force protection measures to ensure the safety of military and civilian personnel at these installations.

Persons attempting to enter military bases can expect significant delays and increase of traffic as Navy security forces implement additional security procedures.

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MN013608. Red Cross Seeks Blood Donations and Money

By Red Cross Public Affairs

Washington, DC - Blood donations are needed now and throughout the weeks and months ahead, according to Red Cross officials.

Sailors, Marines and other individuals who wish to donate can call 1-800-GIVE-LIFE (1-800-448-3543) to schedule a blood donation appointment.

The Red Cross phone line has been receiving an extremely large volume of calls in the wake of the terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C. Callers who cannot get through are asked to continue trying.

Additional blood donation information is available at; www.redcross.org.

The Red Cross is also asking for financial donations to help the victims of this and other disasters. Contributions can be made to the American Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund by calling 1-800-HELP-NOW or 1-800-257-7575 (Spanish).

Internet users can make a secure online credit card contribution by visiting: www.redcross.org.

Contributions to the Disaster Relief Fund may also be sent to your local American Red Cross chapter.

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MN013609. USNH Rota Trains Slovak Psychologists

By ENS Richard Gilliard, Jr., MSC, USNH Rota

Rota, Spain - U.S. Naval Hospital, Rota recently hosted a Military to Military contact program to familiarize the Slovak Department of Psychology of the Ministry of Defense with the roles and functions of U.S. military psychologists in ground force units.

Three Slovak military psychologists were given in-depth briefings on topics ranging from Stress Regulation Centers (SRC) to equipment requirements, administration and operations. CAPT Elizabeth K. Holmes, MSC, a psychologist, spearheaded this groundbreaking event.

The Slovaks were particularly interested in leadership development in both the enlisted and officer communities as their military moves to a voluntary force.

"Because of the transition to a voluntary force they were concerned about retention," said Holmes. "The interest in leadership development was due to the understanding that good leadership training would increase retention."

Other interests included increased knowledge of optimization of performance in adverse conditions, hostage negotiations, terrorism, and human factors under stress.

The mission was a great success and the Slovakian psychologists were pleased with the opportunity to exchange concerns and the custom tailored curriculum provided.

"The common psychology and military languages enhanced the intercultural relationships which greatly contributed to the mission's

success," Holmes added.

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MN013610. DOD Announces Stricter Blood Donations Standards

Dr. J. Jarrett Clinton, acting assistant secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, announced new blood donor criteria for the Department of Defense.

"To ensure the health and safety of servicemembers and their families, we are adopting additional precautionary measures against the very small theoretical risk of the human form of 'mad cow' disease, " said Clinton.

Effective Oct. 29, the DoD criteria will restrict from donating (1) anyone who has traveled or resided in the United Kingdom from 1980 through 1996 for a cumulative period of three months or more; (2) DoD-affiliated persons who have been stationed in Europe from 1980 through 1996 for a cumulative period of six months or more; (3) others who have traveled or resided in Europe from 1980 to present for a cumulative period of five years (applies to DoD personnel on or after Jan. 1, 1997); (4) anyone who has received a transfusion in the United Kingdom since 1980; and (5) anyone who has received bovine insulin produced in the United Kingdom since 1980.

DoD is following draft guidance from the Food and Drug Administration on restricting blood donors who may have been exposed to the agent that causes variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (vCJD). The risk of vCJD transmission from human blood/blood products is theoretical-no cases of the disease have been transmitted in this manner, and no scientific study has established such a link.

Clinton advised, "DoD currently has enough blood to meet operational requirements as well as the requirements of our military medical treatment facilities." However, this precautionary restriction will disqualify an estimated 18 percent of active-duty personnel, not all of whom are donors. DoD will maintain its blood supply by increasing recruitment efforts to replace the restricted donors from the remaining pool of those eligible.

To encourage increased blood donation through the Armed Services Blood Program, DoD plans an information campaign in its internal media directed to its donor population and beneficiaries. The campaign targets blood collections at training bases to maximize collections from training commands and new recruits, who are unlikely to be affected by the new restrictions.

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